

REMARKS

Claims 1-44 are currently pending and are subject to a restriction requirement in which claim 45 is withdrawn. The claims are repeated herein for convenience of the Examiner. In the Office Action, claims 1-44 were grouped into a first invention group I said to be drawn to an insurance claims process (class 705, subclass 4) and claim 45 was grouped into a second invention group II said to be drawn to vehicle/automobile parts simulation methods (class 703, subclass 8), where the first and second invention groups were alleged to be distinct.

Applicant respectfully traverses the restriction requirement and provisionally elects claims 1-44 of invention group I.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has improperly classified claim 45 of invention group II and that it should be classified in the same class as invention group I, namely drawn to an insurance claims process in class 705, subclass 4. Contrary to that stated in the Office Action, claim 45 is not drawn to vehicle/automobile parts simulation methods. Instead, the vehicle is mapped to generate external damage information (such as caused at the scene of an accident) and this damage information is used in an attempt to assess complete vehicle damages *for claim purposes*. Thus, claim 45 should be classified in the same class as claims 1-44.

In the application as filed, Figure 5, described beginning on line 5, page 11, provides an example of such a claiming method recited in claim 45. It is understood, however, that the particular embodiment of Figure 5 and description thereof is exemplary only and not intended for limiting the present invention. Figure 5 is a block diagram

showing an exemplary laser mapping system and method for mapping the surface of the damaged automobile soon after the accident. In one embodiment, a tow truck is equipped with a laser mapping system which retrieves information from the damaged automobile once mounted onto the tow truck and during delivery thereof. Or, the laser mapping system is located at a central repair facility, such as that shown and described in Figure 6. The laser mapping system is positioned to use laser-mapping technology to obtain more accurate damage information from the damaged automobile. The information may be stored locally (e.g., a local storage device) or wirelessly communicated via a communication network. In either case, the data is delivered to an insurer site for insurance claim purposes.

The assessment of damage has nothing to do with vehicle or parts simulation but instead this information is used as an analysis method for assessing damage to a vehicle for purposes of the insurance claims process. It is understood in the insurance industry that the damage of a vehicle is assessed for determining the cost or repair for an insurance claim and/or whether the vehicle is totaled for purposes of determining a replacement cost.

In this manner, Applicant respectfully submits that the restriction requirement is improper and should be withdrawn. Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement. Applicant nonetheless provisionally elects, with traverse, claims 1-44 of the invention group I.

A Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment was mailed 11/1/06. In response, claim 45 is now marked as being withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected invention.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that for the reasons recited above and for various other reasons, the restriction requirement is improper and should be withdrawn. Reconsideration of the restriction requirement is respectfully requested. Should this response be considered inadequate or non-responsive for any reason, or should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions that would expedite the prosecution of the present case to allowance, Applicants' undersigned representative earnestly requests a telephone conference.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /Gary Stanford/
Gary R. Stanford
Reg. No. 35,689

Law Offices of Gary R Stanford
Customer Number 26122